



Recipe for Okra Gumbo

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RECIPE FOR OKRA GUMBO

by Leah Chase

Okra gumbo or crowder peas were the big thing when I was growing up. Those would be your main dish. If you got fried chicken, that was actually considered the side dish.

1/4 cup vegetable oil
3 lbs. fresh okra (sliced thin)
3 medium blue crabs
1 1/2 cups chopped onions
1/2 cup chopped green pepper
1/2 cup chopped celery
2 tbsp. tomato paste
1 1/2 quarts water
1 tsp. crushed red pepper
1/2 tsp. cayenne pepper
1 tsp. paprika
1 tsp. chopped garlic
1/2 tsp. whole thyme
1 tbsp. salt
2 bay leaves
1 lb. shrimp (cleaned and deveined)

For this recipe, a heavy pot is needed (I use Magnalite). Heat the pot. Add oil and okra. Heat must not be high, as the okra must cook slowly. Stir the okra often, cooking for 20 minutes. Add the crabs, onions, green pepper, and celery. Cook for another 15 minutes. Give this pot a lot of attention or the okra will stick. Okra should be soft (not fried to a crisp). Add tomato paste and stir well. Slowly add the water. Stir in crushed red pepper, cayenne pepper, paprika, garlic, thyme, salt, and bay leaves. Cook for 10 minutes, then add the shrimp and continue cooking for another 10 minutes. Serve over rice. Yield: 4–6 servings.

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